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New Light on Early Tudor Composers. VI. Richard Pygot

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many different kinds of vocal sounds that a few more won't matter. And I might further point out that the muted trumpet does not sound like a trumpet (except one of the penny variety), but nobody condemns it on that account. Of course, the effects we have been considering will be used only occasionally, and only one or two at a time. They will be employed chiefly to add to the significance of a song, though no doubt as they become generally accepted, choral compositions (without words) will be written in which many effects will be combined. We shall have brief symphonic poems for voices alone. Think how easily such works will illustrate pastoral scenes, effects of wind, waves, and various meteorological happenings so long as they are not too violent in character. The method will not supersede ordinary choralism: it will be merely supplementary—or complementary.

Perhaps the best way to disarm prejudice would be to treat the effects, not as imitations of instruments, but as new developments of vocal tone. I see no reason why we should not be prepared to accept for musical purposes any vocal sound that can be given a definite pitch—and perhaps a few that cannot.

All the signs point to more and more use of wordless vocal music, and this will in turn lead to the demand for a choral writing which will give us a texture made up of strands of contrasted colour. We shall have some of the women singing with nasal tone against the soft round notes of others, tenors divided into falsetto, chest, and head groups, variety obtained by sections of the choir using different vowel sounds at the same time, and so forth. If space permitted I could show that most of these effects have already been hinted at by composers of various periods. I believe the time has come for their serious consideration. Choral writing can develop little more in the way of complexity. It can never go much farther in the direction of multiplicity of parts, because of the limitations of compass. So long as real heavy basses are scarce we cannot build up a structure of vocal tone on orchestral lines, because the loftier the edifice the greater the need of foundation. Most attempts in this way have given us merely a tonal skyscraper very insecurely grounded. Clearly, then, developments will be chiefly along the line of colour variety, like those in most other departments of modern music. It is useless to object and call such devices trickery. Until recently *bouche jermée* effects were looked on as *ad captandum*. Now we realise that they are among the most subtly-beautiful of musical sounds. We have not yet realised all of them. For example, the Ukrainians gave us some unusually beautiful examples, one especially with an interplay of parts and a variety of nuance suggestive of a string quartet. And, by the bye, some of the Ukrainians' grouping and subdivision of the various parts made one wonder whether we have not been rather too consistently polyphonic in our choral-writing. Be that as it may, I believe that we shall soon see our choral writers making new demands on conductors and singers. These new demands, as I have implied, will not present much difficulty. They will be merely novel, and the chief trouble will be to get choirs to take them seriously. At first the singers will be self-conscious and giggle—perhaps be rebellious. Probably the Sheffield singers thought Coward was going too far, and asking them to make fools of themselves, when he called for the snarl and gibe in 'Gerontius.' They may feel much the same when he begins to work out some of the instrumental effects of the future. But they will end by doing them so convincingly that we shall wonder why we had to wait so long for them.

NEW LIGHT ON EARLY TUDOR COMPOSERS

By W. H. Grattan Flood

VI.—Richard Pygot

Although Richard Pygot does not loom very large as a church composer, yet as a trainer of composers and choir-trainer under Henry VIII. he deserves to be held in remembrance. For over thirty years he laboured in the cause of music, and as a favoured Court musician enjoyed unusual preferment. His name figures among the composers of the music printed in that unique work, 'Twenty Songs, IX of IIII parts and XI of III parts,' published by Wynkyn de Worde on October 10, 1520, containing compositions by Cornish, Ashwell, Couper, Fairfax, Jones, Sturton, Taverner, Gwynneth, and Pygot—of which the only known copy (Bassus) is in the British Museum.

Richard Pygot was born *c.* 1485, and at an early age entered the service of Cardinal Wolsey as a chorister. As early as 1517 we find him as Master of the Children of Wolsey's Chapel, an institution analogous to the Chapel Royal, the singers of which rivalled, if not surpassed, those of Henry VIII.'s own establishment. The following extract from a letter by Dean Pace to Wolsey, on March 25, 1518, gives an interesting notice of Pygot's success as a choir-trainer—all the more valuable testimony inasmuch as Dean Pace was an excellent amateur musician who had studied for many years at Rome:

> The King hath plainly shewn unto Cornish [William Cornish, Master of the Boys of the Chapel Royal] that your Grace's Chapel is better than his, and proved the same by this reason that if any manner of new song [melody] should be brought into both the said Chapels [the King's Chapel and Wolsey's Chapel] to be sung *ex improviso* [at sight] then the said song should be better and more surely handled by your Chapel than by his Grace's.

Pace wrote a further letter on the following day to Wolsey:

> The King has spoken to me again about the child of your Chapel. He is desirous to have it without the procuring of Cornish or other;

in other words, if Wolsey would not send the boy to the Chapel Royal, Cornish would adopt the expedient of impressment or conscription. As a result, on March 29, Pace informed Wolsey that the King thanked him for the child of his Chapel, 'whom he wouldn't have desired except from necessity,' and that he (Pace) 'had spoken to Cornish to treat the child honestly.'

In a fifth letter on the same subject, also from Pace to Wolsey, dated April 1, we note that Cornish was lavish in his praise of the boy of Wolsey's Chapel, 'not only for his sure and cleanly singing but also for his good and crafty discant.' Pace further informs the Cardinal that Cornish also praised Pygot for his excellent method of training: 'Cornish doth in like manner extol Mr. Pygot for the teaching of him.' It may be added that this discriminating musical amateur, who 'discovered' Pygot, was made Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral in succession to Dean Colet, on October 25, 1519.

On January 20, 1520, the King paid a surprise visit, with nineteen gentlemen, to Wolsey's palace of Durham House, where he was royally entertained—Pygot directing the incidental music. Four years later, in 1524, Pygot was appointed a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal, but retained his post in Wolsey's Chapel till the fall of the great Cardinal in 1529. It would seem that he was Deputy Master of the Children of the Chapel Royal in 1526, and we find a pension paid to him as such on May 1, 1527, 'the pension payable by the Abbot-elect of Whitby.'

Pygot retained the Royal favour after Wolsey's death, and on October 7, 1532, he was given a corrody in the monastery of Coggeshall, Essex, surrendered by William Colman. Further preferment awaited him, as on May 12, 1533, there is an entry in the Patent Rolls of his presentation to the canonry and prebend of Tamworth, *vice* Thomas Wescote, resigned.

Notwithstanding the suppression of the monastery of Coggeshall, an order was made on February 5, 1538, that 'Pygot of the Chapel' was to be paid his pension out of the confiscated property. Pygot also had a corrody out of the Abbey of Tower Hill, as by an order of March 23, 1538, Sir Thomas Seymour was bound to pay him a pension of £4 10*s*. His name appears in the Royal pensions list regularly during 1540-47.

Among the manuscripts in the British Museum (Add. MSS. 31922 *f.* 112*b*) is a charming carol by Pygot, for four voices, 'Musyng on her maners.'

On October 31, 1541, Richard Pygot was given a substantial sum for his house at Greenwich. But he must have continued to reside in the same locality, for on September 29, 1543, his name appears in the annuity list as 'of East Greenwich.'

Owing to some informality—very likely because he was a layman, and not even in minor orders—Pygot resigned his canonry and prebend of Wylmecot in Tamworth Collegiate Church of St. Edith; but on October 13, 1545, he was again presented to it by royal favour. In the following month a royal letter was written to the Dean and Chapter of Wells 'to suffer Richard Pygot of the Chapel to reside upon his prebend there, *notwithstanding his laity*.'

The last payment of £6 13*s*. 4*d*. a quarter by Henry VIII. to Richard Pygot was made on October 2, 1546, and in the account of liveries given out for the funeral of the English monarch on February 16, 1547, his name appears among the 'Gentlemen of the Chapel Royal.'

Pygot's services were retained by Edward VI., and he was in high favour at Court. On December 19, 1551, he was given the sum of xxx*s*. by the Princess Elizabeth, who also presented him with a *douceur* of xxi*s*. on January 12, 1552. This is the last reference I have met with of the career of Richard Pygot, and he probably died in 1552.

'THE GREAT GOD PAN' AND ONE OF HIS CRITICS

By H. Orsmond Anderton

The vagaries of the *genus* Criticus Musicus form part of the *Comédie humaine*, and add to the gaiety of nations as well as, at times, to that of the victims, who are not all so shrinkingly sensitive as a Keats. An instance has recently occurred in relation to 'The Great God Pan.' Bantock incarnates himself as Pan, the god of wild nature—or calls him from the vasty deep—surrounded by troops of his fauns, satyrs, nymphs, dryads, and other embodiments of the forces of nature and earth. It is the same instinct that moved Debussy in his 'L'Après-midi d'un Faun,' and in giving a new and radiant 'body of music' to the old animism of early Hellas, Bantock has provided what will bring a tang of delight to many a heart hungering after this earlier naturalistic savour of existence. It is, in fact, a backward glance of regret and longing like that which a man sometimes casts over the days of his vanished youth.

Now it might be thought that one frankly using these old, yet ever young, symbols as the basis of his work might be assumed to disclaim any assumption of being the bearer of an absolutely novel gospel from some distant heaven of art—as hinting that he was not to be taken 'to the grand serious,' as Thackeray puts it. But no. The critic, without even waiting to hear the work, murmurs despairingly, 'No new thing under the sun,' and proceeds in that ironical vein which is the most treacherous weapon of criticism, having something of the nature of the boomerang. In a recent article in the *Athenæum* Mr. E. J. Dent complains that the dances remind him of the dances in 'Tannhaüser,' and that Pan and the nymphs remind him of Alberich and the Rhine-maidens. Well, dances do resemble dances, and ballets have something in common with previous ballets. How many stories are there in the world tricked out in various guises? They have been computed at some ten or a dozen. There is no absolutely new thing under the sun. The value of new work depends upon its added flavour, and how cunningly the disguises are carried out. I have talked with many good critics, all of whom have found the *sauce piquante* in this case amply sufficient. Mr. Dent is of course entitled to his own view, and to say that his palate can detect the goose through the condiments; but to complain that the goose is there is hardly the part of the *camaraderie des bons vivants*. In some cases even the most obvious 'cribbing' is accounted justified.

To take a well-known instance, which may hint also at the danger to the critic wielding the ironical boomerang. Suppose the learned scholar Ben Jonson, when they all adjourned to 'The Mermaid' after the production of 'Antony and Cleopatra,' had also assumed the rôle of Solomon the Wise, and sarcastically exclaimed—'Oh, Will, Will! Plagiarist! Pilferer! 'Tis a thing of shreds and patches! Shade of Plutarch! That purple patch describing Cleopatra's appearance on the Nile is merely cribbed from his pages ['Antony'] and licked into "Marlowe's mighty line."' Even supposing he had carried the impeachment by acclamation then, what should we think of him now? Do we not condone the larceny as justified, and make ourselves accessories after the fact? Or, to give another